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REMARKS

Reconsideration of the rejection of claims 1-8 under 35 USC §112, first paragraph is respectfully requested. There is no basis for the examiner's assertion that the original disclosure required the solvent to be completely devoid of any target compound, or any other component for that matter. The original disclosure, instead, taught that a feature of the invention is control the temperature of the mixture in the evaporator by adding sufficient solvent to the evaporator. There is no disclosed requirement that the solvent must be "pure," and one of ordinary skill in the art would have read the disclosure to encompass additions of a solvent that could include other components provided the proportion of solvent is such that the temperature of the pot is maintained. For example, in the preferred embodiment, the solvent to be added to the evaporator is obtained from the top of the distillation column, and it is common knowledge that some impurities, including the target, are necessarily present in the material so obtained. Accordingly, it is submitted that the claims as presented are fully supported by the specification.

Reconsideration of the rejection of claims 7 and 8 under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, is respectfully requested in light of the amendments to the claims, wherein the examiner's concerns have been addressed. Claim 7 has been cancelled in favor of new claim 9, and claim 8 has been amended to include the separating step.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the rejection of claims 1-6 and 8 under 35 USC §103 as unpatentable over Bowes in view of Cox and Aquila.

While flash evaporation followed by distillation may be known, for example, from Cox, the invention recited in claim 1 includes the further step of adding solvent back to the evaporator, a step that is not found in any of the art of record or even remotely suggested by the newly applied reference to Aquila.

Aquila merely teaches the addition of water to the bottoms of a distillation column to reduce the temperature of the bottoms to below that of water. Thus, Aquila does not teach the addition of water to the evaporator of Cox or Bowes.

Bowes merely teaches separation of ethylene glycol from water by first boiling off the water (i.e., the solvent) and then by raising the temperature to boil off the ethylene glycol (i.e., the target). Degradation caused by higher temperatures is reduced by evaporating the ethylene glycol at reduced pressure. In no way does Bowes suggest the reuse of the water as claimed herein, the reference to column 1, lines 49-51 being merely a reference to "reuse" for a purpose not related to the separation equipment of Bowes. Moreover, one of ordinary skill in the art would immediately realize that addition of water to the boiling chamber 10 of Bowes would merely require that water to be boiled off before removal of the ethylene glycol. That serves no purpose whatsoever in the Bowes system and ruins it for its intended purpose.

As noted earlier, Bowes teaches a process opposite to that claimed and effectively teaches away from the invention because it requires the ethylene glycol to be boiled (see column 5, lines 23 et seq.). The process according to the invention requires the multi-component vapor containing the target and the solvent to be obtained at a temperature below the boiling point of the target, which is a clear distinction from Bowes. According to the invention, the solvent is added to the evaporator to ensure that the temperature of the evaporator remains below the boiling point of the target. Bowes has not even a remote suggestion of such a step.

The Cox patent is similarly distinct from the claimed invention as noted in the earlier response. According to Cox, the first step is to add an alkali metal hydroxide to render the impurities non-volatile and then to flash evaporate all of the ethylene glycol to be recovered. The remaining heavy glycol and solids are then simply incinerated. Nowhere does Cox teach that the temperature of the glycol during evaporation is to be below the boiling point of the glycol. Instead it appears that the temperature of the glycol must be above the boiling point of the glycol because all of the glycol is evaporated. Thus, the temperature of the evaporator 15 must be raised to the boiling point of the glycol.

Thus, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance, and an early indication thereof is respectfully requested.

All necessary extensions of time are hereby requested. Please charge any deficiency and credit any excess to deposit account 50-1088.

Respectfully submitted,
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